

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7078
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 701

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, WA, SF
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: BOTHA'S SPEECH

REF: CAPE TOWN 699,

1. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS APRIL 8, FOREIGN MINISTER
BOTHA IN A SPEECH AT VRYBURG ON APRIL 7, SAID THAT THE
UNITED STATES WAS A DANGER TO ANY MODERATE AFRICAN LEADER
BECAUSE "SHE ACTUALLY ASSISTS RUSSIA IN THE PENETRATION
SHE (RUSSIA) IS STRIVING FOR." BOTHA, WHO WAS OPENING
THE LOCAL AGRICULTURAL SHOW IN THE NORTHERN CAPE MARKET-
TOWN, CRITICIZED PRESIDENT CARTER SAYING "PEOPLE WHO
LIVE IN WHITE HOUSES SHOULD NOT THROW LITTLE ROCKS."
BOTHA ALSO REPORTEDLY SAID "I WANT TO ASK PRESIDENT
CARTER WHY HE DOES NOT ISSUE A WARNING TO SWAPO WHO
HAVE STATED THAT THEY ARE OPPOSED TO PEACEFUL AND
DEMOCRATIC CHANGE IN SOUTH WEST AFRICA. IF THIS IS YOUR KIND
OF MORALITY, PRESIDENT CARTER, I SAY KEEP IT."

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2. ANY MODERATE STATE WHICH WISHED TO DEVELOP
PEACEFULLY BUT COULD NOT SUPPLY OIL TO AMERICA
SHOULD NOT DEPEND ON PRESIDENT CARTER, BOTHA SAID.
THE UNITED STATES, HE CHARGED, WOULD HELP ANY MODERATE
STATE AS MUCH AS IT HAD HELPED SOMALIA. BOTHA WARNED
OF THE TREMENDOUS PRESSURE FROM OUTSIDE THAT SOUTH

AFRICANS WILL FACE. "IF WE MUST STAND ALONE, WE WILL,"
HE SAID, "WE WILL ACCEPT A LOWER STANDARD OF LIVING,
IF NECESSARY, BUT WE WILL NEVER BEND OR GIVE IN."

3. COMMENT: BOTHA'S REMARKS SHOULD BE SEEN IN THE
CONTEXT OF THE INFIGHTING FOR LEADERSHIP WITHIN THE
SAG UNDER PRIME MINISTER VORSTER. BOTHA'S AIDE,
NEIL VAN HEERDEN, INDICATED IN A PRIVATE CONVERSATION
WITH AMBASSADOR MCHENRY YESTERDAY APRIL 7 (REFTEL), THAT THE
POWER STRUGGLE WITHIN THE PARTY WAS INTENSIFYING. VAN HEERDEN
SAID THAT BOTHA'S ENEMIES WERE NOT ONLY CAMPAIGNING AGAINST
HIM WITHIN THE PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS, BUT WERE SPREADING
RUMORS THAT IN THE PARTY CONGRESSES THIS COMING FALL, BOTHA
INTENDED TO CHALLENGE MINISTER OF PLURAL AFFAIRS CONNIE MULDER'S
POSITION AS HEIR-APPARENT. BOTHA'S SPEECH LAST NIGHT WAS PROBABLY
ANOTHER EFFORT ON HIS PART TO MAINTAIN HIS CREDENTIALS
AS A TOUGH NATIONALIST AND IT DOES NOT NECESSARILY HAVE
ANY IMPLICATIONS ONE WAY OR THE OTHER IN REGARD
TO THE SAG CONSIDERATION OF ITS POSITION ON THE
NAMIBIAN PROPOSALS.
BOWDLER

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